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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

$48,000,000 WINNER

The simple hotdog gets gourmet treatment. Page 6.

GRAMMY STAY WITH ME

Crooner Sam Smith accepts his Best New Artist award from Taylor Swift during the 57th annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on Sunday. Smith won multiple awards, including for Song of the Year and Best Pop Vocal Album. For more coverage of the Grammys, see pages 14 & 15. KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

T.O. biz buzzing over pot software

Industry. The smell of U.S. green sparks up a pair of local companies to pursue dominance of new market niche

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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Amid the hype of a burgeoning medical marijuana industry, Toronto tech companies are passing over pot for the potential windfall of marijuana software.

While medical marijuana growers are looking to cash in on an industry expected to reach $1.4 billion in Canada by 2024, these software companies have their eyes set on a U.S. market already worth $2.3 billion, and global markets beyond that.

Ample Organics only launched its seed-to-sale software in January. The software tracks everything from seeds, plant growth, marijuana quality and strains, to orders, shipping and customer service.

The company has already doubled in size and has landed Aphria Inc., one of only three publicly traded licensed marijuana producers in Canada, as its newest client. "That's a huge one for us," said John Prentice, the company's 30-year-old president.

Even so, the Canadian market is "tiny" compared to the U.S., he said, and Ample is pitching the state of Oregon to provide its entire tracking system, with plans to officially launch in the U.S. in May. The company also has "feet on the ground" in the Bahamas.

John Prentice CONTRIBUTED

Grow One, another Toronto-based company promising to "manage virtually every aspect of your production," also has it sights set south of the border.

The company raised $1 million to work with five licensed producers, six applicants, a lab company and consultants to perfect its system before launching, said 26-year-old Peter Barbosa, Grow One founder and CEO.

"This is just the start of something big," Barbosa said.

"Canada is a small market," he said, and the company is "excited" to jump into the U.S., where 23 states allow medical marijuana.

Prentice and Barbosa both founded their companies after realizing that existing software wasn't set up to handle the complex regulatory world growers have to operate in.

Entrepreneurs face numerous hurdles beyond growing good pot: Health Canada's stringent regulations include careful monitoring and quality controls on the products. Companies also have to manage the sales, shipping and customer relations and must also comply with Health Canada audits.

"We have the strictest regulations on medical marijuana anywhere in the world," Prentice said.

"The reporting capabilities and record-keeping requirements are extensive."

Barbosa warned that the industry is still in its infancy. He said Grow One wants to be the best software on the market — not the first.

But Prentice thinks 2015 will be a crucial year for the medical marijuana industry.

"This is going to be the year the doors close on companies that want to work with licensed producers," he said.

Quoted

"If we get it right, it very well could be."

John Prentice, president of Ample Organics, on whether seed-to-sale marijuana software is a licence to print money

Cycling group pushing for bike lanes in Riverdale

Research. Ryerson University study looks at the feasibility of the project

GILBERT NGABO
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Members of the Ward 30 Bikes group at Cherry Beach last summer, as they advocate for a bike path to the lake. Ward 30 Bikes has used the expertise of fourth-year students from Ryerson University's school of urban and regional planning to study the feasibility of the project. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY PAUL YOUNG

A local cycling advocacy group wants the Riverdale area to create safe bike lanes that would connect the neighbourhood to the waterfront.

Ward 30 Bikes called upon the expertise of fourth-year students from Ryerson University's school of urban and regional planning to study the feasibility of the project. Professor Don Verbanac turned the challenge into a practical planning course for his students, and they'll present the final report at a community meeting on Monday.

It's important for the people of Riverdale to have alternate and safe ways of getting to the lake, not only by driving, said Paul Young, a member of Ward 30 Bikes.

"The No. 1 reason people don't cycle more in the city is because they don't feel safe," he said.

"Riverdale is one of the parts of the city where you can't easily get down to the lake. We sometimes just forget that we live close to the lake because there aren't any direct routes to the water from the community."

Quoted

"The No. 1 reason people don't cycle more in the city is because they don't feel safe."

Paul Young, Ward 30 Bikes

The bike lanes would give people direct access to many "fantastic" recreational destinations on the waterfront. These include the Leslie Spit, Cherry Beach and the Martin Goodman Trail, said Young, who is also a health promoter at South Riverdale Community Health Centre.

"It would add an improvement to people's daily commute and give them some control over conditions that affect their lives," he said.

"Cycling is beneficial to people's physical and mental health."

Options presented in the report include a bike path on Leslie Street (currently under construction but no plans for bike lanes), as well as Cherry Street and Carlaw Avenue, he said.

In the past, Ward 30 Bikes successfully advocated for the creation of bike lanes on Dundas Street East.

Trying to reel in a winner

Connor Hawke, one of eight finalists in the Toronto Sportsmen Show's Cast Off competition on Sunday, attempts to drop his lure into a steel hoop in an effort to win one of two $30,000 grand prizes. Unfortunately, none of the finalists were able to complete the task and take home the grand prize. TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

T.O. high-school specialty programs tough to get into

Open houses and information nights, followed by two-hour entrance exams, nerve-racking interviews or day-long auditions — just to get into high school.

Scores of Toronto teens — unlike their parents, who typically attended the one closest to home — are undergoing application processes worthy of any university to get a spot in one of the coveted specialty programs in public schools across the city.

"There appears to be an incredible need from families looking for these sorts of programs," said Michael McMaster, who heads the highly competitive TOPS science and math program at Marc Garneau Collegiate in East York, which saw 1,500 people attend an open house, and 560 students apply for 60 spots.

He fields calls from anxious families when their children are in Grades 4 or 5, asking for advice on how to get them in.

"They are willing to make all sorts of sacrifices, in terms of commuting distances for their child, and there will be families who pick up and move" to be closer to Garneau once accepted, he added.

"I am shocked and amazed when that happens."

From catering to aspiring athletes to challenging students through technology or the arts, Toronto high schools are drawing kids in from across the city — and even outside it.

Right now, high school is the talk of the town as acceptance letters go out this month, prompting one proud middle-school teacher to take to Twitter last week to let the world know one of her students made it into the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Monarch Park Collegiate.

At the Toronto Catholic board's Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, near Yonge and Sheppard, up to 800 teens want in, but just 175 will make it based on their audition.

Janeen Brownrigg's daughter Ryan found out last Monday she'd been accepted into the Etobicoke School of the Arts in the Toronto District School Board, which auditioned up to 800 students and offered spots to 250.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Unfurling Roll Up the Rim odds

Statistical secrets.
Web developer tries to find out which cup size is most likely to win

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In possibly the most Canadian use of big data ever, a Toronto web developer is trying to unlock the statistical secrets of Tim Hortons' Roll Up the Rim to Win contest.

Kent English is the man behind rollupthestats.com. The site lets users input their Roll Up the Rim results, with the goal of discovering which cup size is most likely to cough up a free doughnut or new car.

"I hope we can get people from across the country contributing their own results so we can build a data set and see what patterns emerge from it," English said.

At press time, large cups were leading the pack, fitting the popular theory the coffee chain puts more prizes in larger sizes.

"You always wonder if you'd have gotten a large, would you have had a better chance of winning," English said. "There's only one way to find out, and that's by collecting some data."

English said he built the site "for the heck of it" earlier last week as a fun example of the power of open data. As he gets more submissions, he plans to chart wins based on location and show how different kinds of prizes are distributed across cup sizes.

The site is mobile-friendly, meaning users can input their results on their smartphones, English said. He also encouraged people to use the site even if they didn't win.

"I want losers, too," he said. "If you bought a large and didn't win, that helps me determine the frequency of how often large wins."

Odds

According to Tim Hortons, the odds of winning the Roll Up the Rim contest are one in six.

Can big data improve your odds of winning Tim Hortons' Roll Up the Rim to Win contest? Toronto web developer Kent English is finding out. CONTRIBUTED

How online dating is killing T.O.'s entertainment industry

Lindsay Duncan tried meeting people at bars, clubs, etc. then switched to online dating. Her experience has a happy ending and she is now living with her boyfriend. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

When it came to meeting someone special, Lindsay Duncan tried it all.

Several years ago, as a university student, the Mississauga resident typically went out two to three nights a week to pubs, clubs and social events. Paying cover at nightclubs and buying drinks and new clothes to fit her busy social schedule put a dent in her wallet.

The payoff? Some fun nights out with friends, but still no man in her life.

"It wasn't the environment that was working for me. I did that for like, six years," Duncan, now 26, says with a laugh.

In 2012, she tried online dating — and never looked back.

"It costs less," she says. "You don't have to go out and buy drinks all the time, (or) a new outfit."

Duncan is definitely not alone in switching strategies, forgoing traditional dating methods for the online route thanks to its efficiency and lower cost.

Some say this trend toward digital dating is having ramifications throughout the dating industry, affecting all sorts of businesses, from nightclubs to bathhouses.

"Online dating is more popular than meeting in a bar or meeting through your church or temple," notes Julie Spira, a Los Angeles-based online dating expert.

It's now a $2.2-billion industry, she says, and it's expected to grow thanks to the rise of smartphones and social media, which help people stay constantly connected to their digital dating realm.

"The average user is on two, if not three, dating sites," Spira says. "They really are casting a wide net."

According to Spira, the rise of online dating may be having a positive ripple effect on various areas of the economy. "The more frequently somebody is on a dating site, the more often they're dating — they're getting their hair done, buying a dress, sending flowers," she says.

And it shows no sign of slowing. Spira says online dating is expected to grow 3.5 per cent every year.

Matt Casselman, who spent 15 years working in Toronto's DJ and nightclub scene, says online dating is a big reason many Torontonians have cut clubbing out of their weekend activities. He says that's had a noticeable impact on the industry.

"There was a time when Toronto's entertainment district had dozens of large night clubs all operating on the weekend. Of course, many of them have closed for many different reasons, but I would say a giant reason would be online dating," says Casselman, now a Toronto-based realtor.

As reported last month, the recent closure of the Guvernment, a 22,000-square-foot venue, signalled the end of Toronto's super-club era.

But Francis Gaudreault, new chair of the Church-Wellesley Village BIA, says businesses need to evolve to coexist with online dating.

"Technology is such a pervasive element of our society, you have to find a way to integrate it into business models," says Gaudreault, who is also co-owner of Pitbull Events, a premier gay entertainment company.

It's something Gaudreault has tried first-hand. In June 2014, Pitbull Events partnered with Scruff, a dating and social networking app geared toward the gay community, for a Scruff-sponsored event at Toronto's Phoenix Concert Theatre.

Gaudreault says the event was a success and "a great integration," bringing out more than 1,000 people.

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Public board's hit-list schools mostly in poorer areas: Study

Education. Report reveals 40% of the facilities slated for closure are among the most needy 20% of schools in the city

More than two-thirds of the elementary schools the Toronto District School Board plans to consider for closure or merging over the next few years due to falling enrolment are in the city's poorer neighbourhoods — threatening upheaval for students who already face steep odds, warns a report to be released Monday by the Elementary Teachers of Toronto.

"For some of these vulnerable kids, school is the safest place they'll be all day and they often have an incredible sense of community, but if these kids are split up and sent to schools without that support, it could derail them," warned John Smith, president of the ETT, the largest local in the provincial teachers' union.

The board has approved a 10-year capital plan that identifies 60 schools for possible closure across 17 under-enrolled neighbourhoods by 2021, with 31 of those schools clustered in nine neighbourhoods to be reviewed in the first three years.

Using the board's own index for measuring a school's socio-economic challenge — family income, parents' education, percentage of single-parent families — the ETT's report found 68 per cent of the 48 grade schools targeted for review by 2021 rank above the board median for high socio-economic need.

Moreover, 19 of them — or 40 per cent — are among the most needy 20 per cent of schools in the city as measured by this "Learning Opportunities Index" or LOI.

And 45 per cent of them have such high demographic need they already receive extra support through a program called Model Schools for Inner Cities, which dedicates staff and funding to build outreach into the communities. Families come to these schools for everything from doctors' appointments to career workshops.

"Closing the schools and programs that support our most vulnerable students flies in the face of everything that the public education system stands for," said Smith.

While few suggest the TDSB is targeting schools simply because they are in poor neighbourhoods, economist Armine Yalnizyan wonders if higher-income parents can just be too intimidating for a school board to want to tackle over an unpopular school closing.

"Looking at (Torstar News Service's) map of schools that are on the list, I see almost none in higher income neighbourhoods — is it because higher-income neighbourhoods are more successful at fighting closure? These are the parents who can marshall their resources quickly and who have the time to protect their interests," she mused.

She also warned some schools may have lower enrolment because the neighbourhood has a high number of elderly, who could soon be replaced with younger families.

"You want to be careful you're not shutting down schools you may need in five years — Chicago and Boston both made the mistake of closing schools with low enrolment, largely in black and Latino neighbourhoods, and then saw the enrolments rise.

No matter which school or schools close in this cluster, low-income students will be affected.

Yet some clusters have fewer students living in poverty. In the downtown neighbourhood of Harbord Village, four schools are slated to be reviewed for closing or merger starting this year; Kensington Community School (25 per cent full, expected to be 26 per cent in 2034), King Edward Jr. and Sr. School (69 per cent full, expected to hit 79 per cent by 2034), Lord Lansdowne Jr. and Sr. Public School (75 per cent full now, expected to hit 112 per cent by 2034) and Ryerson Community School, which is 45th on the LOI and, unlike the others in its cluster, a Model School.

The teachers' union also notes that 48 per cent of the elementary schools targeted also have child-care centres, at least 77 per cent house community programs and 27 per cent have parenting centres, which the ministry does not count as part of the school's "utilization rate," the key trigger for a school to be reviewed for closure.

"Most act as vibrant community hubs in their neighbourhoods, housing daycare facilities, parent and family centres, and general community programs and activities," said Smith.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Government pressure

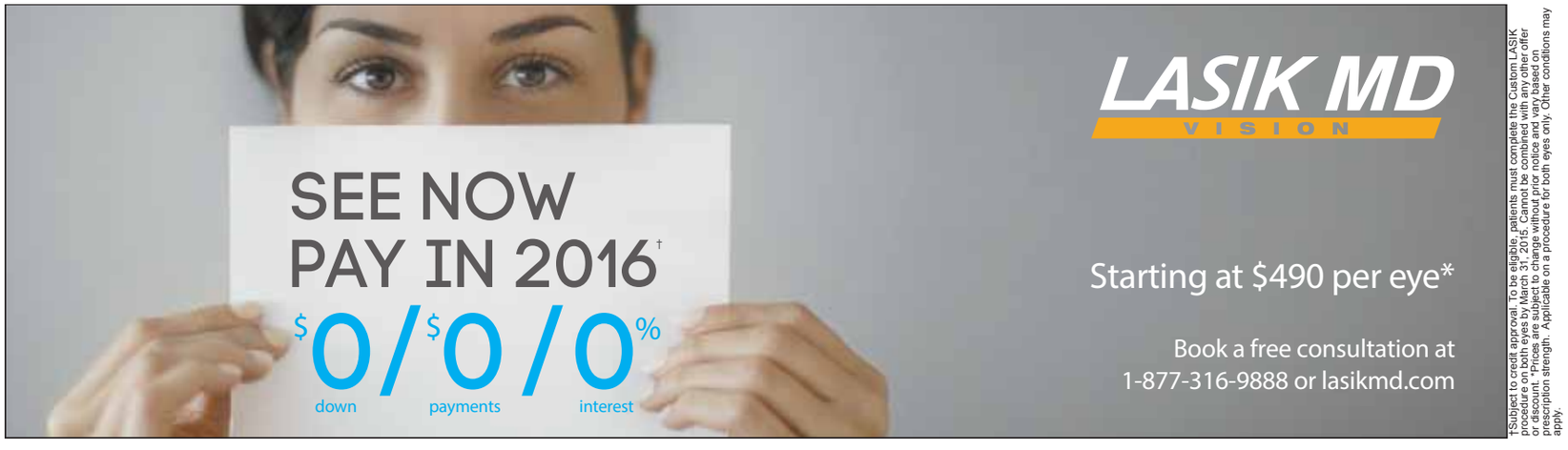
The TDSB is under enormous pressure to start closing some of its 130 schools that are less than 65 per cent full, on orders from Education Minister Liz Sandals, who has demanded a three-year plan by Friday for closing schools.

Dennis Avenue Community School, at 17 Dennis Ave., which is 65th on the Learning Opportunities Index (the TDSB's index for measuring a school's socio-economic challenge) and a Model School, is 59 per cent full this year and projected to fall to 51 per cent by 2034. TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"For some of these vulnerable kids, school is the safest place they'll be all day ..."

John Smith, president ETT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Tetriminos fall in place for tourney

Video games.
Tetris championship goes public after outgrowing its home

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Tetris fans, bust out your old Gameboys. Neil Wysocki is organizing Toronto's first public Tetris tournament Thursday night at Handlebar in Kensington Market. COURTESY EDWARD POND

Toronto Tetris players are warming up their thumbs and breaking out their Gameboys in advance of the city's first public Tetris tournament.

The event, scheduled for Thursday night at Handlebar in Kensington Market, is being organized by Neil Wysocki.

"I can't think of another puzzle game that's even close to Tetris," the 30-year-old photographer says.

Billed as the city's third annual Tetris championship, it's actually the first time the event is being held outside of Wysocki's house.

"It started as an invite-only party but it just got too big," he said.

"It was getting really rowdy, and my neighbours were threatening to call the cops."

Forced to find another venue, Wysocki approached Handlebar — the bar already runs regular retro video-game nights — and from there, the pieces just fell together.

The competition's format lets two Tetris players go head-to-head, with completed lines from one player's side added to his or her opponent's.

"It rewards completing multiple lines quickly. The better you are, the more likely you are to top-out your opponent," Wysocki said.

Space at the event is limited, and aspiring Tetris champions are encouraged to email register@tetris-championship.biz to save their spot.

Quoted

"Tetris is the first video game I ever owned. I grew up playing it all the time."
Tetris tournament organizer Neil Wysocki

No place for Z

Of all the Tetris pieces, Neil Wysocki says the Z piece is the most universally reviled.

- "It just never seems to fit anywhere," he said.

Let Khadr speak: Media group

A federal court is reviewing the constitutionality of Correctional Service Canada's refusal to grant the media access to former Guantanamo Bay inmate Omar Khadr.

On Monday, the court will hear a challenge launched by Torstar News Service, the CBC and White Pine Pictures that argues denying interviews with Khadr amounts to a breach of the public's right to know.

The proceeding follows two years of attempts to speak with Khadr, despite the 28-year-old's willingness to go on the record about his experiences.

"This case has made headlines, and for years we've heard one side of the story, we've heard the government's description of events," said Sukanya Pillay, executive director of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. "I think the public has an interest and a right to hear from Omar Khadr directly."

Khadr was captured in Afghanistan in 2002 at the age of 15, following a firefight with U.S. and Afghan forces. In 2010, he pleaded guilty to five war crimes. He has since said he only took the plea deal to be released from Guantanamo.

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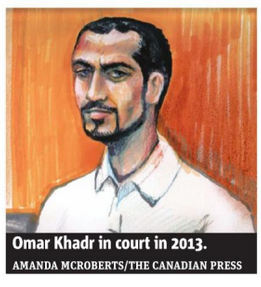

Omar Khadr in court in 2013. AMANDA MCROBERTS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Anya Craig and Leo Hepler get their hands busy making postcards and handwritten letters to send to their loved ones for Valentine's Day. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

A valentine made with time and love, like in the old days

GILBERT NGABO
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On a cold and snowy Sunday afternoon, Anya Craig was busy putting pieces of paper together for her special someone.

Armed with scissors, glue, papers and pencils, she spent hours at the Toronto's First Post Office making a handmade postcard for her husband. She would also compose a handwritten letter for him, and get the package ready in time for Valentine's Day.

"These initials don't even mean anything in particular," she said in reference to three letters she had cut out of a paper and was putting on a postcard.

"But it reminds us of our own time together and has always meant something intimate between us. Perfect for a Valentine's gift."

In a digital age where anything can be done through Internet, many still long for the old feel of opening up an envelope and seeing somebody's handwriting.

The Valentine's Bee at Toronto's First Post Office was a drop-in event for lovers, secret crushes or just friends or relatives to be creative and send their special ones something unusual.

"I think it's coming back. It's a little trendy right now," said Kate Akerfeldt, the post's assisting curator. "As technology takes over people's lives with Facebook and texts and stuff, a lot of people miss the old ways and get wistful about them."

Quoted

"There's something special about getting a card that you know someone spent time making just for you." Anya Craig

And it's not just around organized events and special occasions. At least five handwritten letters go through this post office every day, plus tens of handmade postcards, she said. The demographics vary, she added, but mainly it's people in their 20s, downtowners, mostly university students, but also parents and their children.

So why can't Craig just send a love email to her husband next Saturday, have dinner and call it a day?

"Email? That's usual. Everyone can do that," she said, carefully placing letters on the postcard. "There's something special about getting a card that you know someone spent time making just for you."

Dedicating time and effort in this craft for her love is actually a lot of fun, she added.

From street to gourmet, hotdog sees a revolution

Food. 'Haute' dog craze heating up in Toronto

Simon Colyer dreamed of opening a restaurant for decades, but he never pictured having the Dogfather and Mac Daddy featured prominently on his first menu.

Then again, the Toronto-based computer programmer didn't exactly picture hawking hotdogs for a living.

"I thought maybe a barbecue joint or a sandwich shop," says Colyer, co-owner of the new Let's Be Frank hotdog bar on College St. just south of Spadina Ave.

He and his wife, Christa Muio, kept their day jobs and their entrepreneurial dreams on hold as they raised their son, who is now in university. Five years ago, they bought a food truck and tested the market.

"We wanted to do something quirky with comfort food, and we saw all these gourmet burger places but no one was doing hotdogs," says Colyer, as he tucks into a colourful Korean BBQ Dog, which he tops with a fried egg, kimchi and Sriracha mayo.

The high-end hamburger business is definitely booming in Toronto, and street meat is also getting a restaurant makeover, with a wide variety of gourmet toppings and wild flavour combinations that are elevating the tired old tube steak.

Quoted

"The gourmet thing has really blown up ... It's the dog's turn."

Fancy Franks' owner Angelos Economopoulos

Simon Colyer, co-founder of Let's Be Frank, with one of his fancy hot dogs at his restaurant on College St. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Colyer's food truck/trailer is up for sale, now that he opened the restaurant and bar two weeks ago. One of his competitors is Fancy Franks, just around the corner on Spadina.

As the "haute" dog craze heats up, Fancy is set to open its third location in a few weeks on Queen St. W.

Shakes and Franks also opened last month in the Beaches area, using Nathan's Famous franks (Let's Be Frank does, as well), with creative toppings from macaroni and cheese and pulled pork to pineapple salsa and pico de gallo.

"The gourmet thing has really blown up. Burgers, pizza, everyone has done a great job with that. It's the dog's turn," notes Fancy Franks' owner Angelos Economopoulos. "The hotdog has had a bad rap in the past, so I wanted to show what could be done with it."

With prices ranging from $4.50 to $9, his dogs are all made with shoulder beef in lamb casing to give it that old-school snap when you bite in.

One of his most popular versions is Frankie Goes to Buffalo, which is his take on Buffalo chicken wings with a panko-fried frank along with blue cheese dressing and wing sauce, right on down to the chopped celery and carrot sticks all packed in the bun.

"I wouldn't say I'm a chef, but I know what I like and how to put things together that taste good," says the restaurateur, who ran more traditional restaurants in Toronto before jumping into his fast-food venture.

Mike Sutton, owner of the Mike's Doghouse food truck, has seen it all since he started serving his dogs in Toronto back in 2000, when his main competition was the vendors at the city's hotdog carts.

Though his business has evolved amid the competitive food truck revolution with the addition of other items including burgers, poutine and funnel cakes, he says it all comes down to the dog.

"It's been the core business and it's a family food. You can feed it to a four-year-old and his 94-year-old grandfather. They aren't going to go for a fish taco or a $12 pulled pork sandwich," says Sutton.

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B.C. community evacuated post-snowstorm

Heavy snow blankets houses as residents of Kitimat, B.C., dig out Saturday afternoon after a snowstorm that left about 180 centimetres piled up, knocking out power and blocking streets. Haisla First Nation Chief Councillor Ellis Ross called for the evacuation early Sunday morning of Kitamaat Village, one of the only areas near the northern B.C. town that remained without power.

ROBIN ROWLAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fahmy faces retrial on terror charges

Cairo. Mohamed Fahmy gave up his Egyptian citizenship to secure his release; now he faces a Feb. 12 court date

Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy is set to face a retrial on terrorism-related charges in Cairo this Thursday, a development his family called their "worst nightmare."

Fahmy — who has spent more than a year in an Egyptian prison — was expected to be set free after former Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird said just days ago that his release was "imminent."

But Fahmy's family said Sunday the 40-year-old journalist and his Egyptian colleague will now be re-tried on Feb. 12.

"The trial date on Feb. 12 represents our worst nightmare, to have to go through another circus of a retrial," said Fahmy's brother, Adel.

Fahmy and two colleagues — Australian Peter Greste and Egyptian Baher Mohamed — were working for satellite news broadcaster Al Jazeera English when they were arrested on Dec. 29, 2013.

They were accused of supporting the banned Islamist Muslim Brotherhood group of ousted Egyptian president Mohammed Morsi. They were also charged with fabricating footage to undermine Egypt's national security.

The trio denied all the allegations against them, but Fahmy and Greste were sentenced to seven years in prison, while Mohamed was given 10 years.

Greste was freed last Sunday under legislation that allows Egypt's president to deport foreigners convicted or accused of crimes.

Fahmy — who had dual Egyptian-Canadian citizenship — had relinquished his Egyptian citizenship with the hope of being released under the same legislation.

"The authorities visited him before the appeal hearing on Jan. 1 and made a deal with him to renounce it in return for his freedom," Fahmy's brother said.

The family said Amal Clooney, Fahmy's high-profile human rights lawyer, has requested a meeting with Egypt's president and will travel to Cairo to press for his release.

"She had planned to fly from L.A. to Toronto to meet Fahmy upon his release but she hopes they can fly together out of Cairo toward freedom," his family said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian response

Lynne Yelich, minister of state for foreign affairs and consular affairs, said the Canadian government has continued to advocate for Fahmy's immediate release at the highest levels.

Taxes

Agency can give police evidence

The federal tax agency can now hand police evidence of any serious crime it happens to come across when reviewing tax files. The new authority derives from the federal government's latest omnibus bill. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Seal meat

Cherry responds to online outrage

Don Cherry has replied to the furor from Inuit communities after he called co-host Ron MacLean a "savage" and a "barbarian" for eating seal meat, stating he has no problem with anyone who eats the meat. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Banff National Park

Search for rescue worker delayed

The search for a rescue worker lost during an avalanche has been delayed until Monday stemming from concerns over darkness and the potential for further avalanches to occur. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Jordan

Airstrikes against ISIL, general says

Jordan has launched 56 airstrikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL's) weapons depots, training centres and military barracks since militants released a video of them burning a Jordanian pilot to death, Jordan's air force chief said Sunday. Since Thursday, the Jordanian air force has attacked and destroyed 56 ISIL targets, said the air force chief, Gen. Mansour al-Jabour. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. politics

Ted Cruz not ruling out U.S. ground forces against ISIL

Sen. Ted Cruz, a potential presidential candidate is 2016, isn't ruling out sending U.S.'s ground troops to fight ISIL militants. Cruz told ABC that "if need be, we should go that step. But it should be driven by the mission." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt

At least 25 killed in soccer riot

A riot broke out Sunday night outside of a major soccer game in Egypt, with a stampede and fighting between police and fans killing at least 25 people, authorities said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Desertion

U.S. Marine will finally face trial

A U.S. Marine who vanished from a base in Iraq and later wound up in Lebanon is set to face trial more than a decade after the puzzling case began.

Cpl. Wassef Hassoun's court martial on desertion and other charges starts Monday at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Defence attorneys maintain that he was kidnapped in 2004 by insurgents and that later, after briefly returning to the U.S., he became tangled up in Lebanese courts for years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two Sydney café hostages recall plots to stab gunman

Australia. Man Haron Monis took 18 people hostage at Lindt café in the country's capital

In this Dec. 15, 2014 file photo, Bae Jie-un, a staff member of a Sydney café and one of the hostages, runs to armed tactical-response police officers for safety. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Two staff members of a Sydney café revealed in interviews broadcast Sunday how they plotted to stab a gunman who held them hostage during a 16-hour siege in December, while two others described how they escaped the ordeal.

Joel Herat, 21, and Jarrod Morton-Hoffman, 19, said in paid interviews broadcast by Nine Network television that they armed themselves with box cutters after gunman Man Haron Monis took them and 16 other people hostage in the Lindt café in downtown Sydney.

"I've got this knife in my pocket and I know Joel has a knife in his pocket and we are so close, we can do this," Morton-Hoffman said.

"But he had his gun. He had it on his knee and I could see that it was pointed directly at Julie Taylor," a pregnant hostage, Morton-Hoffman said.

Meanwhile, staffers Bae Jie-un, 20, who was on her first day back after a vacation, and Elly Chen, 22, who had been employed for less than a week, told Seven Network television in paid interviews how Bae quietly unbolted an internal door to enable both to escape.

The café's 34-year-old manager, Tori Johnson, was killed after Monis forced him to kneel on the floor and then fired a cartridge to the back of his head with a sawed-off shotgun after a second group of hostages escaped, a coroner's court was told last month.

Police stormed the café, fatally shooting Monis and accidentally killing Katrina Dawson, a 38-year-old lawyer, with bullet fragments that ricocheted.

Monis, a 50-year-old Iranian-born, self-styled cleric with a long criminal history, took the customers and workers captive and forced them to outline his demands in a series of online videos — including that he be permitted to speak to Australia's prime minister and be delivered a flag of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the coroner was told. The coroner's inquest is looking into how police managed the crisis, including whether snipers should have shot at Monis through the windows.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott last week received a report on a government review of the siege and the events leading to it. The review, expected to be released in a month, examined why Monis was free on bail despite facing a string of violent charges. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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HUDSON'S BAY

Attend a CIBC Pan Am Athletes' Village (West Don Lands) information session for area residents and businesses.

Toronto residents, who live in the vicinity of the Pan Am Athletes' Village (West Don Lands - 409 Front Street East), and local businesses are invited to the St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre on Wednesday, February 11, for drop-in information sessions to learn more about the Games and neighbourhood impacts.

Date: Wednesday, February 11
Location: St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre
230 The Esplanade, Toronto

Business session: 3 - 5 p.m.
Questions: businessinfo@toronto2015.org

Resident session: 6 - 8 p.m.
Questions: residentinfo@toronto2015.org

Pan Am Games
July 10–26, 2015

Parapan Am Games
August 7–15, 2015

Google

Mapping service adds local guides

An update to Google's free online map service lets users become local guides who post reviews of businesses and venues in a challenge to Yelp.

Local Guides was described by Google as a global community of the top reviewers who reap benefits based on how much they post about businesses they visit. **AFP**

Markets

Investors focus on corporate Canada

Investors will be focused on earnings from corporate Canada this week as they assess how badly depressed commodity prices have impacted the bottom lines of resource companies. It has been a challenging time for Canadian resource companies as prices for metals and oil have been hammered in recent months. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

A mechanic works on the engine of a TransAsia Airways ATR aircraft at the Songshan airport in Taipei, Taiwan, on Saturday, three days after one of the carrier's ATRs crashed. WALLY SANTANA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taiwan. TransAsia meets with crash victims' families

TransAsia Airways representatives met Sunday with relatives of the victims of last week's plane crash in Taiwan to discuss compensation, after it began distributing money to families of the deceased for funeral costs.

At least 40 people died after the propeller-jet crashed into the muddy Keelung River minutes after takeoff Wednesday from Taipei's airport. Fifteen of the 58 people aboard the plane were rescued. Divers are trying to find the bodies of three people still missing by using metal detectors to locate their watches or seatbelts.

Preliminary investigations indicate the pilots of the TransAsia Airways ATR 72 shut off a running engine after its other engine went idle, a move that aviation experts said was an error.

A TransAsia spokeswoman, Fang Chia-wen, said a second meeting would be held on Wednesday to discuss compensation matters further. She said the airline had already begun distributing 1.2 million Taiwan dollars (about $47,500) per victim to families for funeral expenses. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

'Sharing economy' reshaping markets

Internet. Car-sharing, finance, staffing, accommodation, music and video streaming sectors worth $335B by 2025, research firm PwC estimates

Uber is the best-known platform in the sharing economy. QUIQUE GARCIA/AFP

Want to make a bit of extra cash driving strangers around in your car, taking care of someone's dog, renting your apartment or cooking a meal?

Welcome to the sharing economy.

The new way of operating has been reshaping entire economic sectors, with the promise of improved efficiency and more flexibility.

The spectacular rise of ride-sharing, home-sharing and other services turned these economic models upside down, and has fueled complaints that these services effectively skirt rules on safety, consumer protection and labor rights.

Some economists say this "peer-to-peer" model offers numerous advantages by tapping underutilized resources.

The sharing economy "can improve consumer welfare by offering new innovations, more choices, more service differentiation, better prices and higher quality services," says a study by George Mason University economists.

Researcher Christopher Koopman, an author of the George Mason report, said the sharing economy "allows people to take idle capital and turn them into revenue sources." **AFP**

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VOICES

18 MAYORS CAN'T BE WRONG

City leaders across the country, from Gregor Robertson to Mike Savage all agree: The feds need to cough up more cash for Canada's urban centres

TORY'S TORONTO
Matt Elliott

Let's start with the obvious: The mayors are right.

Eighteen of them, representing Canada's largest cities, met in Toronto last week for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Big City Summit. The group included everyone from Vancouver's Gregor Robertson to Calgary's Naheed Nenshi to our guy John Tory.

Their message at the end of their session: The federal government has got to do more for cities.

They've got a ton of evidence supporting their position.

Despite several years of a nearly universally hot real estate market, Canada's big municipalities are struggling with their infrastructure.

Transit is strained. Bridges and water mains face huge repair or replacement bills. Public housing is literally falling apart.

And the numbers tell us why.

According to a 2012 City of Toronto Performing Measurement and Benchmarking Report, property taxes account for just 9 per cent of all taxes paid, which means the local government directly receives only about nine cents of every tax dollar paid by the average family. Splits in other municipalities are similar.

That nine cents ends up getting stretched a long way, going toward covering some of our most visible and important public services.

Sure, cities receive transfer payments from provincial and federal governments to help, but these payments are often unreliable — they come and go like the tides.

And every indication is that the federal government in particular continues to short-change cities. Numbers from the United States Census Bureau in 2008 showed the 35 largest American cities on average funded about 8 per cent of their operating budgets with federal money.

Toronto, on the other hand, only counts on Ottawa for a little less than 2 per cent of operating funds.

So the problem is clear. What about the solution?

It won't be easy. Municipal underfunding is something that crosses party lines. It's not been a Conservative thing or a Liberal thing.

It's been a constant thing.

For any hope of change, Canadian mayors need to take a new and consistent approach.

First, they need to always demand a share of government revenues, not spending. Right now, Ottawa gets away with sporadically announcing some support for certain projects whenever it's politically advantageous.

A far better system is for the federal government to transfer a direct percentage of revenues to local governments, like happens with the gas tax.

Second, municipalities can't be afraid to increase their revenues when Ottawa cuts federal revenues. The cut to the federal sales tax nearly a decade ago should have been an opportunity for cities to pursue a local sales tax — a measure that could have erased many of today's infrastructure problems.

Third, local governments need to use the coming federal election to make their case. Be forceful, unrelenting and, if necessary, loud as hell.

Because after all, the mayors are right. The politicians in Ottawa need to hear them.

Your Toronto

Owl swoops in at dinnertime

Photo submitted by Metro reader Mark Mattina

Metro reader Mark Mattina captured this image of a female adult Snowy owl at Humber Bay Park. He says he was shooting a merganser eating a fish when "the owl swooped down at them just before sunset."

SEE YOUR SHOT HERE: Send us high-quality snaps of your city to readers@metronews.ca

Upcoming

Self-publish for success

You know that story you've been trying to write and publish? Here's a chance for you to learn how it can be done. Toronto-based novelist and public speaker Richard Todd will lead a session on the three biggest rules to self-publishing. The free drop-in program happens Tuesday at the Brentwood Library branch (36 Brentwood Rd. N). Todd is also the president of The Editor's Desk, which offers coaching and editing services to writers in the GTA and beyond.

GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Rally in support of indigenous women

No More Silence will be holding marches across the country on Feb. 14, in an effort to bring more awareness to the issues of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls. A local rally will take place Saturday at Police Headquarters, 40 College St, starting at 12:30 p.m. The movement is collaborating with Families of Sisters in Spirit and the Native Youth Sexual Health Network to create a community-owned database to document and investigate cases of missing and murdered women.

GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Cannibal! The Musical

Trey Parker's Cannibal! The Musical makes its world premiere as a revamped stage show with new jokes and new songs. The musical starts its run Tuesday at Panasonic Theatre (651 Yonge St.). It's the story of five miners from Utah who embark on a treacherous journey to stake their claim on land in the Colorado Territory.

GILBERT NGABO/METRO

metro

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The Grammys play it safe

Grammy Awards. Go to bed early last night? We highlight the night's top moments so you can fake like you tuned in

Last night's 57th Annual Grammy Awards was hyped up to be one of the most dramatic and controversial ever, but despite a few standout moments, the night was pretty lacklustre.

Hosting duties

LL Cool J played host for the night for the fourth time and opened the show with an enjoyable tease of Going Back To Cali. He last hosted the show in 2012, a few days after Whitney Houston's death. Now, with Houston's daughter Bobbi Kristina Brown in critical condition, Cool J decided not to comment on the tragedy, instead focusing on the night's performers and nominees.

Performances

With a whopping 23 performances, there were plenty of chances for something jaw-dropping to take place, but theatrics were kept at a minimum. Usually energetic performer Ariana Grande stuck to a ballad of Just A Little Bit Of Your Heart. In general, the performances skewed older with AC/DC opening the show, Lady Gaga taking the stage with Tony Bennett and of course Madonna, who actually gave a phenomenal performance, proving she still has it at 56 years old.

Some other performances worth YouTubing include Miranda Lambert, Kanye West and Rihanna, Hozier and Annie Lennox, and Pharrell. This was West's first-ever time performing at the award show, but he more than made up for it by taking the stage twice.

Taking a stand against domestic violence

Katy Perry, in all white, sang the ballad By the Grace of God after a woman who had been abused talked about getting help and moving on with her life. A video of President Barack Obama appeared before she spoke, and he encouraged artists to help out.

"It's on us, all of us, to create a culture where violence isn't tolerated," he said.

Smokey Robinson, right, presents Beyoncé with the award for best R&B performance for Drunk in Love. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Best remix

Tiesto's birthday gift: Grammy win

DJ-producer Tiesto remixed a song for his birthday and now he has a Grammy for it. Tiesto remixed John Legend's All of Me, which won the Grammy for best remixed recording, non-classical. "I gave it away as a free download," he said.

Let It Go

Frozen soundtrack takes two awards

The soundtrack for the animated tale Frozen won two awards, including best compilation soundtrack for visual media. Idina Menzel's Let It Go, took the Grammy for best song written for visual media. The Frozen soundtrack has sold close to four million units.

Pharrell won for best pop solo performance for Happy. GETTY IMAGES

How will Sam Smith celebrate after winning his Grammys? He said he wanted to go to In-N-Out, that overwhelmingly popular SoCal burger chain. And don't worry about all those calories he'll rack up with a double-double or two. Smith says he's been dieting just for this night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More details online

For a full list of winners and more Grammy Awards coverage, go to metronews.ca

Winners

This year's most controversial award, best rap album, was announced without fanfare before the show. Eminem won, beating out Iggy Azalea, Childish Gambino, Common, Schoolboy Q and Wiz Khalifa. Considering all the controversy surrounding Azalea's nomination, everyone was definitely waiting for this one.

This really wasn't Azalea's night. She also lost best new artist to Sam Smith, who also won for best pop vocal album, two predictable, yet deserved wins. Best pop solo performance went to Pharrell for Happy while best R&B performance went to Beyoncé.

In one of the evening's few surprises, Beck won album of the year for Morning Phase.

Things get surreal

Sam Smith who also took record of the year and song of the year, was nominated for six Grammys, something he called "surreal."

But not as surreal as when Stevie Wonder asked him to drop by his dressing room. Wonder ended up performing one of Smith's songs.

"That's just crazy," he said on the red carpet.

Success will go to his head

Every musician has his or her own Grammy ritual.

For Weird Al Yankovic, if he wins, he takes the gramophone-shaped trophy and attaches it to his head.

"I'm kind of like a Grammy unicorn," says the accordion-squeezing funnyman, who won his fourth Grammy on Sunday. Yankovic, who won his first Grammy 30 years ago, says it's still a thrill just to be in the running.

"I never get jaded about it," he said.

METRO U.S. WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Strutting on the red carpet at the Grammys

Beyoncé GETTY IMAGES

Kanye West and Kim Kardashian THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madonna gets cheeky. GETTY IMAGES

Dancer Maddie Ziegler and songwriter Sia. GETTY IMAGES

Rihanna GETTY IMAGES

Pre-Grammy party

Clive Davis gala salutes old school

Clive Davis' annual pre-Grammy gala was as white-hot as usual: A-Listers from Taylor Swift to Jamie Foxx were in the audience, and performances ranged from chart-topping singers to old-school icons. The gala, which serves as a pre-party for the Grammy Awards, featured performances by John Legend, Pharrell, Iggy Azalea and Carole King. Here are some of Saturday night's highlights:

Fine wine
While Sam Smith opened Clive Davis' gala with a memorable performance, the new artist took a backseat to veterans who shined bright. Carole King earned a standing ovation when she performed Beautiful and You've Got a Friend. And the night closed with Barry Gibb — the only surviving member of the BeeGees — who sang To Love Somebody to loud cheers.

Celebs are fan girls, too
When Meghan Trainor performed a soulful duet with John Legend, Miley Cyrus took photos of the All About That Bass singer as she performed Like I'm Gonna Lose You.

Awkward
An awkward moment came when Magic Johnson introduced Davis at the top of the show. At some moments, Johnson referred to him as Clyde.

Prayers for Bobbi Kristina Brown
Johnson held a moment of silence for Whitney Houston's daughter Bobbi Kristina Brown. On the red carpet, singers also offered well wishes for the 21-year-old Brown, who was found face down in a bathtub at her home on Jan. 31."My heart really goes out to her family," R&B singer Ciara said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taylor Swift arrives at the Grammys. GETTY IMAGES

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Pulling the plug on time-thieving tech

Trend. More and more people are choosing to take a step back from the virtual world and reconnect with real life

Patton Oswalt took a summer-long hiatus from social media last year.
GETTY IMAGES

With virtually everyone spending increasingly more time plugged in to the Internet, some are considering a digital detox, an extended time-out from the online world.

Prolific political writer Andrew Sullivan recently announced plans for a break from blogging after 15 years of pounding the keyboard. In a note to readers on his website, The Dish, Sullivan wrote of being "saturated in digital life" and wanting to "return to the actual world again."

Last May, actor and comedian Patton Oswalt also posted a lengthy note on Facebook announcing a summer hiatus from social media.

"If I don't, I feel like my psyche is going to suffer permanent slippage," he wrote.

Michael Harris documented a month spent without his phone or Internet access in his book The End of Absence: Reclaiming What We've Lost in a World of Constant Connection (HarperCollins).

The Vancouver native said he came away from his digital detox feeling the need to be less passive with his tech use.

"These technologies are very ruthlessly designed to capitalize on really basic animal instincts to grab your attention," he said. "In the same way that you can't just walk into the grocery store and buy whatever food that (your) desire for sugar and fat is telling you to buy, we have to engineer our media diet for ourselves."

While some may feel the need for an extended "digital fast," Harris said another approach is to make manageable adjustments in your daily life.

"Something like 50 per cent of us sleep with our smartphones on bedside tables. And when we wake up, the first thing that we think is: 'What did I miss?' instead of thinking: 'What will I do with my day?"' Harris said.

"Take that 30 or 40 minutes to say: 'I'm not going to let my Twitter feed colonize my brain right away. I'm going to have a shower, I'm going to make a cup of coffee."'

Vancouver-based business and leadership coach Lauren Bacon said she's not of the belief that individuals need to unplug completely to experience mindfulness.

"I do think cultivating consciousness and awareness of what our own priorities are, of what we really want out of a day, is kind of step one," said Bacon.

"We need to start there if we're going to make any headway ... We need to be really clear on what matters to us to get done in a day, what emails can afford to be left unread or unresponded to, and what interactions really do feed us and make us feel connected, versus what interactions are just kind of demanding and draining."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The first artist to use the new YouTube feature is Madilyn Bailey.
YOUTUBE/AFP FILE PHOTO

New. YouTube testing video feature that gives multi-angle perspectives

YouTube is getting ready to roll out a new feature that will let users switch between different camera angles on selected clips.

The new feature doesn't have a name yet but is rolling out to artists this week and will enable them to upload the same footage shot from a number of angles plus an audio track.

YouTube will then magically stitch everything together so that when one of the site's one-billion-plus users launches a video, they can play at being the director, changing the angle at will.

AFP

A 'surreal' time-travelling Zelda game, a tool to make your selfies more artsy and a book that tells of life at Guantanamo

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
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scene@metronews.ca

Video game

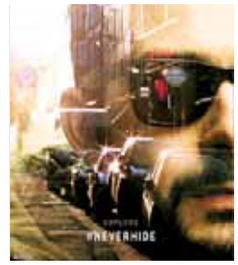
Name. The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask

For. Nintendo 3DS

Rated. Everyone 10+

By far the most surreal of the Zelda games, Majora's Mask is a wonderland of nonsensical carnival characters that will play with your perceptions through a three-day time loop. Link is at his youngest, using fantasy masks to change into imaginative forms with different abilities and a musical ocarina to repeat events. But the lack of maps at the beginning and the need to keep track of time travel can make it a disorienting handheld game to play on-the-go.

App



Reflections X Ray-Ban

iPhone/iPad
Free

By using both your front and back smartphone cameras, Reflections will blend pictures taken between them both for an artistic selfie you can then further stylize using filters and effects.

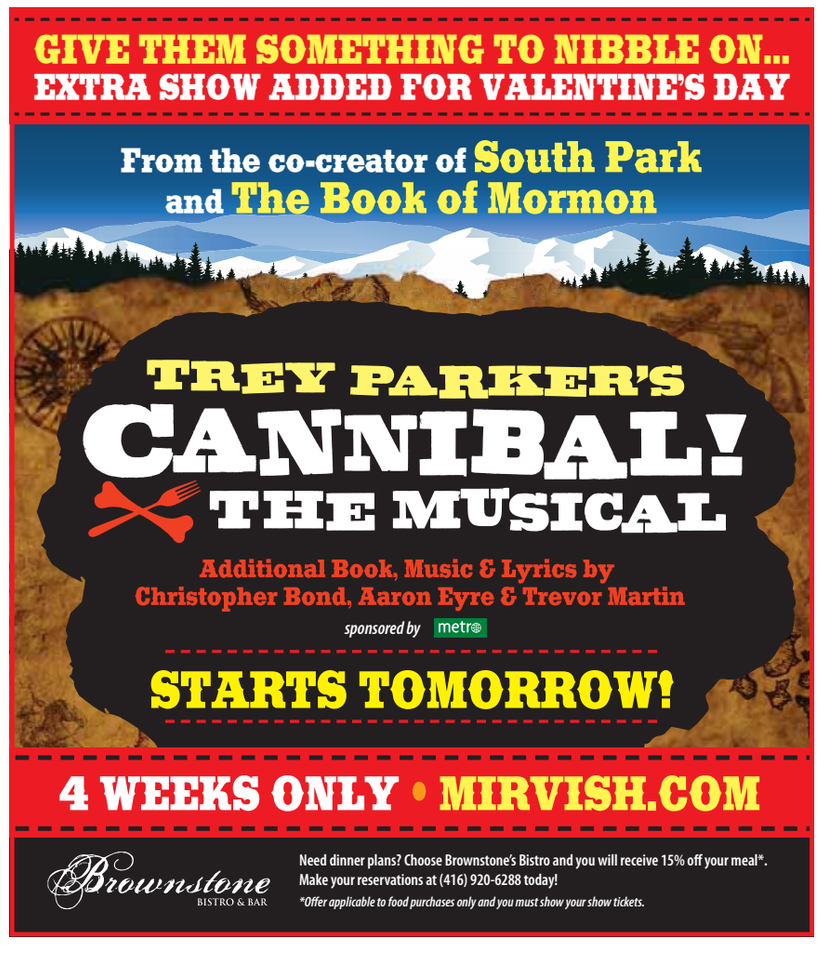
Ebooks

Guantanamo Diary

By. Mohamedou Ould Slahi

Kindle/iBooks/Kobo

A former member of Al Qaeda who maintained dangerous friendships, it's easy to see why Mohamedou was picked up by U.S. intelligence 12 years ago, but navigate through the scanned pages and heavily redacted text of his prison diary and it's less clear why he's still at Guantanamo Bay today. This is a tale told with surprising sensitivity and intelligence.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DVD review

Nightcrawler

Director. Dan Gilroy

Stars. Jake Gyllenhaal, Rene Russo, Bill Paxton

As a cadaverous and predatory TV news-hound assaulting L.A. streets and the viewer's senses, Jake Gyllenhaal is the media's Grim Reaper, with a protruding camera substituting for a beckoning bony finger.

His Leo Bloom appears whenever blood is flowing, life is ebbing and someone is willing to pay for the ghastly footage. Bloom's a cross between Robert De Niro's most sociopathic characters: Taxi Driver's Travis Bickle and The King of Comedy's Rupert Pupkin.

Rene Russo seems familiar here, too. As Nina, news director for a ratings-desperate local TV station, she's a down-market local version of Diana, Faye Dunaway's nationwide harpie in Network.

The film is full of clenched-teeth wisdoms, not to mention graphic violence, which clearly delights writer-director Dan Gilroy, co-screenwriter with his brother Tony of The Bourne Legacy.

"I want something people can't turn away from," Nina says, but we don't always get that from Nightcrawler.

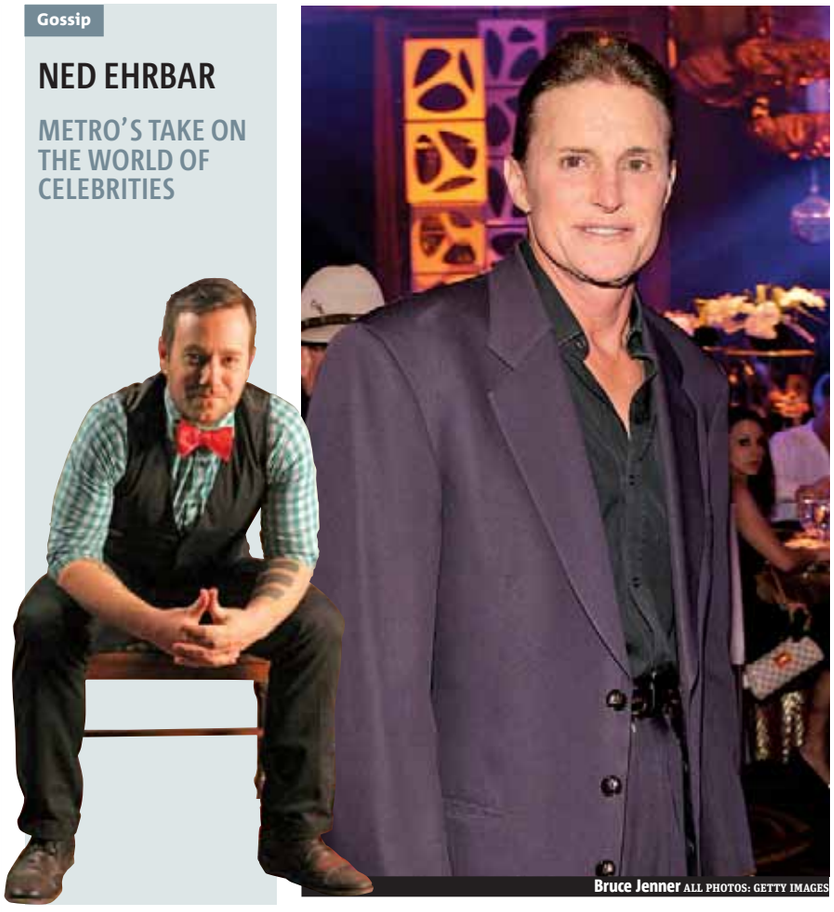
Extras include a director/editor commentary and making-of featurette.

PETER HOWELL

Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES



Bruce Jenner ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Jenner may have been texting at time of fatal accident

Texting and driving may have played a role in the Bruce Jenner multi-car accident in Malibu over the weekend that left one woman dead.

On Saturday, while driving on the Pacific Coast Highway, Jenner's Cadillac Escalade rear-ended a Lexus that was coming to a stop at a light.

The collision sent the other car into oncoming traffic, where it was struck by a Hummer, killing the driver of the Lexus.

Now law enforcement sources tell TMZ that they are procuring warrants for Jenner's phone and its records, as photos of Jenner immediately before the crash suggest he had something in his hands.

If he was found to be illegally texting while driving, he could be charged with vehicular manslaughter.

Teen Mom star proactively preventing pregnancy with new condom line

While I usually stop reading anything once the words Teen Mom pop up, this is admittedly kind of genius. One of the show's precocious procreators, Gary Shirley, has launched a line of condoms with his name and face on the wrapper. And honestly, I can't think of a better deterrent to unprotected sex and teenage pregnancy than a bright, smiling reminder of the kind of corpulent reality star you could become if you don't play it safe.

Shirley took to Twitter to unveil his new line of prophylactics with a simple, "Revealing my condoms!" And boy does he seem excited.

Gary Shirley's new line of condoms

SUPPLIED: @ITSGARYTIME

Katie Couric

Katie Couric eyes Brian Williams' job

While Brian Williams takes a few days off to refresh his memory about the Iraq War, the vultures are apparently circling. Among them? Former NBC mainstay Katie Couric, who left the network for CBS in 2006 to become the first female nightly news anchor — for a little while, at least. "Katie still has deep, deep contacts at NBC. She would love to return as the Nightly News anchor," a source tells the Daily News. "No one smells blood like Katie. She is like a shark. Brian is in deep trouble and this could be her chance. You don't get to be as successful as Katie without being ruthless."

Katy Perry

Katy Perry's Super Bowl success leaves John Mayer Hot 'n' Cold

Maybe the reviews of Katy Perry's Super Bowl halftime show were too positive, as rumour has it she's become pretty tough to deal with at home.

At least for her newly reunited boyfriend John Mayer.

"John was there with her during the Super Bowl and has been incredibly supportive.

"But following the game, her ego has gotten out of hand," a source tells Radar Online.

But!

"She says that he cannot admit that he is jealous and that is the main problem right now.

"John does not have a lot going on right now with his career, and she thinks that he is taking it out on her because everything is going amazing for her right now.

"The tables have turned as far as who the more successful one is in their relationship."

Ouch.

Well, Mayer has to understand not everyone can be a Firework like Katy Perry.

Life isn't Rosie as O'Donnell leaves The View again

Talk about a domino effect. Rosie O'Donnell's second tenure at The View is coming to a premature end so that she can head home to deal with the end of her marriage to her wife of three years, Michelle Rounds. "I can confirm that Rosie and her wife, Michelle, split in November," O'Donnell's rep says in a statement. "Rosie has teens and an infant at home that need her attention. This has been a very stressful situation. She is putting her personal health and family first. ABC has been wonderfully understanding and supportive of her personal decision to leave The View. Next week will be her last."

Rosie O'Donnell

Arranging your piles of money

Planning. Instead of thinking about cash as one big pot, divide it into separate accounts with distinct purposes

GAIL VAZ-OXLADE
Gail blogs daily at gailvazoxlade.com

I've always thought of my money in piles, separate and distinct, each with a purpose or a place: cash flow, emergency, planned spending and long-term saving.

Cash flow

Cash flow is your keeping-it-together-money. It's the money that comes in and goes out every month to pay bills, buy food, and get you from hither to yon. Your budget is the framework for your cash flow. When you get paid, the money flows in. When you pay for something, the money flows out.

If you don't have a budget, you can't possibly be managing your cash flow. Sure, you may feel like you're doing all right, but mental math is a sinkhole and it's only a matter of time before you hurt yourself. If you want to be a master of cash flow, you'll not only make a plan for how you'll use your money (a budget), you'll also use a spending journal to track your day-to-day money activities.

Emergency pile

Emergency is the money you set aside, just in case. You're supposed to build your emergency pile up to six months' worth of essential expenses, which are the things that will keep body and soul together.

A key concept

- The idea of piles of money is perhaps one of the most significant differences between the people who are successful at managing their money and those that aren't.
- Having allocated money to a pile, a body isn't tempted to spend it on anything else. And having piles of money can be a lifesaver if you've got a mate who can't keep his or her hand off the money in the house account. Having moved the money out of sight, it's out of mind until you've got enough to make your purchase.

If you allocate money to a specific purpose, and then move it out of sight, you won't be tempted to spend it on something else. ISTOCK

And this money should be kept in a high-interest savings account so it's easy to get at.

I know it's pretty popular to think that putting that much money in a savings account is stupid because you can't earn enough to beat inflation, but that's not the point of the emergency fund. The point is to have cash available so that when some storm blows in, you have options to deal with it. No money, no options. You'll just have to suck it up.

Planned spending pile

Planned spending is what most people never do. At the start of every year I look at what I spent on gifts the previous year, divide it by 12 and move that amount into my gift account monthly. When the time comes to go shopping, I'm ready.

Tons of stuff falls into the planned spending category. From home maintenance to clothes for the kids, from vacations to that new couch you've been eyeing, if you have to accumulate money so you can make a purchase, it's planned spending.

If you don't accumulate the money and plan to count on your credit cards or line of credit to get you what you want, you shouldn't wonder at your growing debt and your sense that your money is wagging you!

As to where to keep this pile of money and how to track it, I use a high interest savings account for each category (savings accounts are free) and I name it so I'm not confused about what the money is for.

Look for an account paying the best interest rate going so your money isn't sitting completely idle. If you don't want the hassle of multiple accounts, you can pile it all into one account and keep track of the various categories on a spreadsheet.

Long-term saving pile

Long-term saving is the money you don't touch for a long, long, long, long, long time. It's your retirement money. It may be your kids' school money. This money is sacred, so you don't dip into it for any reason. When you slide this money away, it's gone, vamoosed, vanished until the end date when you need it.

As long as you see savings as something you can tap should the need arise, the previous three piles don't seem as important. Shift your focus to keeping this money socked away no matter what, and you'll soon see how important it is to manage your cash flow, have an emergency fund and plan your spending.

If you can wrap your head around the idea of piles of money instead of one big pot, then you're more likely to keep the amounts you allocate for specific purposes intact.

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Today's students not partying as much as mom and dad did at school

Education. College freshmen focused more on their future during high school, report low emotional health

It's studying over socializing for many of today's high school seniors. ISTOCK

Today's high school seniors aren't partying and socializing as much as their parents' generation: They're too busy trying to get into post-secondary, and when they get there, some don't feel good about themselves, a new survey reports.

The annual survey of college freshmen by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute found that incoming students at four-year colleges and universities last fall devoted half as many hours to hanging out with friends during their final year of high school as students who entered college in 1987, when the institute first asked respondents about hobnobbing habits.

The findings rang true to Isabella Galeazi, 18, who is juggling a job at McDonald's and a musical production internship along with a full-time course load at California State University, Fullerton. Balancing her professional and academic responsibilities with her desire for a thriving social life has proven a challenge that sometimes leaves her feeling snowed under, Galeazi said.

"My parents are always saying, 'When they were in school, when they were in school,' but I can show them my math homework and they have no clue how to do it," she said. "The workload is a lot heavier and the work is a lot harder. There is so much pressure to do well in high school or otherwise you won't get into college, and if you don't do well in college, you won't get a job."

Quoted

"There is so much pressure to do well in high school or otherwise you won't get into college, and if you don't do well in college, you won't get a job."

Isabella Galeazi
Student at California State University, Fullerton

The survey found that first-year-college students' sense of emotional well-being is at its lowest since the institute first asked the question in 1985.

The results are consistent with other trends that indicate millennials face greater pressure to succeed academically and have less time for fun, said Kevin Eagan, the institute's managing director and an assistant professor at UCLA

"The declines we have seen in time spent partying and the frequency of alcohol use in high school and the increases we have seen in the number of college applications students are submitting and their reporting feeling overwhelmed are all signs students are internalizing this message that they need to take the last year of high school seriously," Eagan said.

In the survey, nearly 39 per cent said they spent five hours or less each week socializing, compared to the 18 per cent who mingled with others that much in 1987. During the same 27-year period, the percentage of students who said they passed six or more hours each week "partying" shrank from 35 per cent in 1987 to nine per cent in 2014.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Learning. Musical training in youth keeps brain functioning longer

From instrument to intellect, a little music can go a long way. ISTOCK

Learning how to play an instrument prior to age 14 and sticking with it for at least 10 years could preserve cognitive skills such as understanding human speech in old age, according to a new Canadian study from the Rotman Research Institute (RRI).

Seniors who fit this description of musical experience were 20 per cent faster when identifying speech sounds than their non-musical counterparts, according to the study, which was published in the Journal of Neuroscience.

"Musical activities are an engaging form of cognitive brain training and we are now seeing robust evidence of brain plasticity from musical training not just in younger brains, but in older brains, too," says lead author Gavin Bidelman, at the time a post-doctoral fellow at the RRI. Bidelman is currently an assistant professor at the University of Memphis.

Dr. Bidelman and his team used electroencephalography (EEG) imaging to assess how well their participants — a group of 20 healthy adults aged 55 to 75 — could classify or identify speech.

Among the participants, half qualified as being musicians according to the study's standards and the other half did not. In a controlled laboratory setting, they put on headphones and were asked to listen to and identify random speech sounds that ranged from simple, single vowel sounds of "ooo" and "ahhh" to ambiguous, mixed sounds that were more difficult to recognize.

Because EEG technology offers ultra-precise measurements of the timing of the brain's electrical activity in response to external stimuli, the researchers say they have strong evidence of the cognitive preservation musical training affords.

AFP

Take note

The RRI study is the most recent of many that make the case for the brain benefits of musical training, particularly if it starts during youth.

- While cognitive advantages are most frequently cited, researchers in Vermont recently published a study suggesting that musical training could be more effective than medication for children with psychological disorders.

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Nutritional information

Per serving

- **Calories.** 368
- **Carbohydrates.** 14 g
- **Fibre.** 4 g
- **Protein.** 47 g
- **Total fat.** 12 g
- **Saturated fat.** 2.4 g
- **Cholesterol.** 105 mg
- **Sodium.** 415 mg

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

Chicken that is simmered in a tasty stock is incredibly tender when cooked and served in minutes. The key is to maintain a medium-low heat to prevent the chicken from overcooking and getting dry.

Coating the chicken with flour keeps the juices in.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 4 single breasts)
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 tsp vegetable oil (divided)
- 12 oz chopped oyster mushrooms
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 1/3 cup pitted diced black olives
- 1 cup diced plum tomatoes
- 3/4 cup halved teardrop or grape tomatoes
- 1 1/2 tsp crushed garlic
- 1 tbsp capers

Garnish

- 3 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp toasted pine nuts or almonds
- 3 tbsp feta cheese, crumbled

Directions

1. Dust chicken with flour. In a hot, large nonstick skillet sprayed with vegetable spray, add the oil and sauté the chicken for 3 minutes or just until lightly browned on all sides. Remove the chicken and set aside.

2. In the same skillet, coated with more vegetable spray, add the oil and sauté the mushrooms on medium heat for 8 minutes or just until tender. Add the stock, olives, plum tomatoes, teardrop tomatoes, garlic, capers and chicken. Cover and simmer on a lower heat for 10 minutes or just until the chicken is cooked.

3. Garnish with chopped parsley, toasted pine nuts or almonds and crumbled feta cheese. **ROSE REISMAN'S SECRETS FOR PERMANENT WEIGHT LOSS (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

This recipe serves four. BRIAN MACDONALD PHOTOGRAPHY

Sweet take on potato skins

Potato skins are so popular today that I thought I could develop a healthier version using sweet potatoes.

These Roasted Sweet Potato Skins with Tzatziki are incredible and contain an abundance of nutrients.

They have more vitamin C, fewer calories, more fibre and fewer total carbs than the white potato.

The combo of cheeses and tzatziki complement the potato so well.

This recipe serves four. ROSE REISMAN

1. Preheat the oven to 450 F. Pierce the potatoes all over with a fork and microwave on high for 6 minutes or just until they are tender. Slice each potato in half lengthwise and scoop out filling, leaving the shells intact. Store the pulp for a side vegetable dish.

2. Rub the olive oil all over the potato skins and sprinkle all over with salt, pepper and chili powder.

3. Place the potato skins on a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes, just until skins are crisp.

4. Add grated cheeses and bake for another minute until cheese melts.

5. Garnish the sweet potato skins with green onion and tzatziki sauce. **ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1/8 tsp chili powder
- 1 oz grated mozzarella cheese
- 1 oz grated white old cheddar cheese
- 1 green onion thinly sliced
- 4 tbsp tzatziki sauce

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The Spurs' Tim Duncan attempts a shot over the Raptors' Amir Johnson on Sunday at the Air Canada Centre. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Johnson, Raps shut down Spurs' Big 3

NBA. Toronto holds Duncan, Ginobili, Parker to 25% shooting en route to its eighth win in last 10 games

On Sunday

Raptors	Spurs
87	82

James Johnson poured in a season-high 20 points to lift the Raptors to an 87-82 victory over the San Antonio Spurs on Sunday, Toronto's eighth victory in 10 outings.

DeMar DeRozan added 18 points, while Amir Johnson had 15 and Kyle Lowry had 12. Jonas Valanciunas grabbed a season-high 16 rebounds in one of Toronto's best defensive efforts of the season.

The Atlantic Division-leading Raptors (35-17) were coming off a huge 123-107 win over the Clippers on Friday that saw them claw their way back from an early 20-point deficit.

They never led by more than 10 in Sunday's dogfight, and went into the fourth quarter up 64-58 in front of an Air Canada Centre capacity crowd of 19,800 that included Toronto FC's newest acquisition Sebastian Giovinco.

The Spurs fought back and a three-pointer by Marco Belinelli with 2:20 to play gave San Antonio a three-point lead. A dunk from Amir Johnson got the fans on their feet and cut the lead to one. Then James Johnson — who started in place of Greivis Vasquez in just his second game back from missing four with a hamstring injury — stepped back to drill a three with 50 seconds left as the crowd roared.

The Raptors dug in on defence on the Spurs' next possession, then James Johnson sunk a free throw with four seconds left. Duncan chucked the ball across the court and out of bounds to seal the Raptors' win.

The Spurs were a horrible 31-for-93 shooting, as the Raptors held the Spurs' big three of Duncan, Tony Parker and Ginobili to a combined 10-for-40. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Soccer

Bradley bends in corner kick as U.S. beats Panama

Michael Bradley put a corner kick into the net in the 27th minute, and the United States snapped a five-game winless skid with a 2-0 victory over Panama on Sunday.

Clint Dempsey scored his 40th career goal later in the first half for the Americans, who wrapped up a month-long training camp with their best result in 10 games since winning their opener at last year's World Cup.

The U.S. had won just once since beating Ghana in the Brazil World Cup.

Bradley, also a midfielder for Toronto FC, scored an Olimpico goal, putting his corner kick directly into the far top corner of the net with a big bend. Jozy Altidore could have headed it in if needed, but instead watched it settle for Bradley's 13th career goal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blind salvages a tie for Man United vs. West Ham

Daley Blind smashed home an injury-time equalizer to rescue a point for Manchester United in a 1-1 draw with West Ham in Premier League action on Sunday.

West Ham's Cheikhou Kouyate opened the scoring with a stunning volley in the 49th minute, after Wayne Rooney failed to clear a free kick. Kouyate turned 180 degrees in the penalty box to score after juggling the ball twice. But Blind saved the visitors after two minutes into added time when a speculative ball from Marcos Rojo was only partially cleared and landed at the midfielder's feet. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA. Grizzlies bring down Hawks in dying minutes

Mike Conley had 21 points and six assists, Marc Gasol finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds and the Memphis Grizzlies beat the Atlanta Hawks 94-88 on Sunday.

The game was tied at 86 after Mike Scott's three-pointer with 3:24 left before Memphis scored the next eight points to put away the game.

Zach Randolph had 11 points and 15 rebounds, while Kosta Koufos finished with 10 points and seven rebounds as Memphis outrebounded the Hawks 55-37.

Jeff Teague led the Hawks with 22 points, shooting 9-for-13, while Kent Bazemore added 14 points.

The Hawks converted 12 of 30 from three-point range. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MMA

"The fight should be cancelled because it's cheating; it's a biological weapon that you have."

Former UFC welterweight champion Georges St-Pierre, a longtime advocate for improved drug testing, spoke out in the wake of former middleweight champion Anderson Silva testing positive for two steroids.

Basketball. Legendary North Carolina coach dies

Dean Smith THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Dean Smith, the Hall of Fame innovator who won two national championships at North Carolina has died. He was 83.

The retired coach died "peacefully" at his Chapel Hill home Saturday evening, the school said in a statement Sunday from Smith's family. He was with his wife and five children. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leafs blue-liner Morgan Rielly snaps a goal past Oilers goalie Viktor Fasth during a 5-1 win on Saturday night. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'Goal of the year' an example of sophomore Rielly's progress

NHL. Blue-liner's spectacular individual display helped Leafs end 11-game losing streak

It just kind of happened. That's how Morgan Rielly describes one of the most breathtaking goals of the NHL season.

The Toronto Maple Leafs defenceman stole the puck from Edmonton's Nail Yakupov in his own zone, made Derek Roy miss along the boards beyond the blue-line, evaded Jeff Petry going to the net and toe-dragged Andrew Ference out of his skates in front before going high glove-side on goaltender Viktor Fasth on Saturday night.

It was unassisted, unadulterated hockey skill at its finest and what goalie James Reimer called "the goal of the year."

"In my head I didn't really plan it like that, but that's just the way it played out," Rielly said. "I got some ice and I had a chance to make a play and thankfully I was able to do it."

Rielly's rush was the latest piece of evidence that the 20-year-old is blossoming into a franchise cornerstone. The 2012 first-round pick has some work to do defensively, but his development has progressed even further under interim coach Peter Horachek.

Horachek has leaned heavily on Rielly and played him 20-plus minutes in 12 of 14 games since taking over.

"He's a dynamic player," Horachek said. "His escapability, his skating. He can do some things in the (defensive) zone and gets out of danger sometimes. He's still a young man and it's really starting to come on." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"I think he has some trust in me that if I have a chance to make a play, I'll probably make it and if I don't I'll be able to recover."

Maple Leafs blue-liner Morgan Rielly on his relationship with coach Peter Horachek

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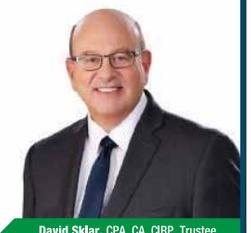

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Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will find it ridiculously easy to get people to do what you desire over the next few days Take advantage of it.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
The people you will have to deal with today respect facts and figures, so show them your plans and let them know how you can make them work.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There can be no more excuses for putting off something you should have taken care of a long time ago. You can and you must find a way to get it done.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Try not to let worries and fears get the better of you today. Cosmic activity in one of the more sensitive areas of your chart means you must consciously and continually strive to stay cheerful.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you find you cannot handle a task on your own today don't be shy about getting assistance. Friends and family will rally round if you ask them.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you need to communicate with employers or other important people now is the time. You will find it easy to put across your ideas and make a good impression. Make it seem as if it all comes naturally.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Tell the truth as you see it. There will be a lot of confusion over the next few days and much of it will be designed to lead you away from what is going on.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Your attitude towards something will harden today and you will refuse to meet others halfway. That's good. The planets indicate you will only get where you want to go if you know your own mind.

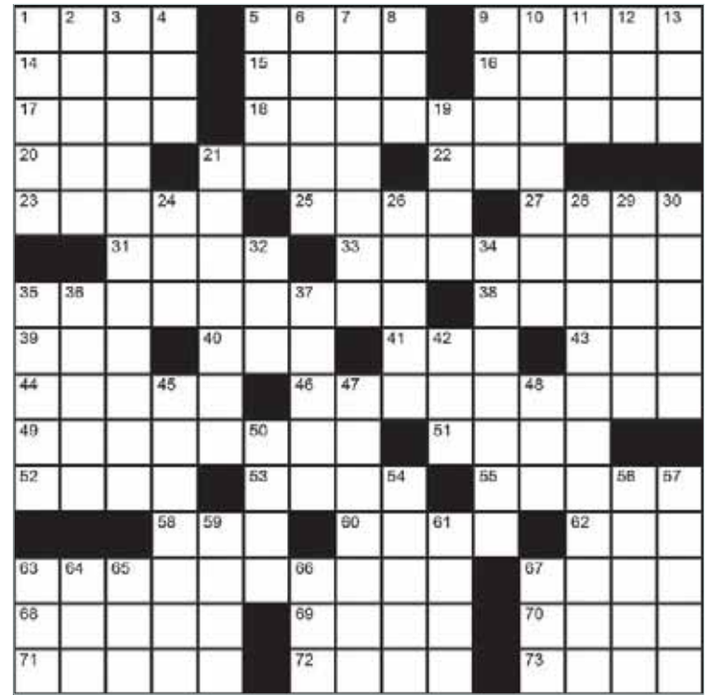
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Spell out what it is you are planning to do and let friends and work colleagues know you could do with some assistance. Chances are they will do whatever they can to help.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You need to let someone know you are under no obligation to do their bidding. This may come as a surprise to them as you have allowed them to get away with so much.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If the plans you made a month back don't seem to be working out the way you intended, trash them today and start again.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You need to explain to loved ones why you've done certain things. What matters most is that they can see it is part of a plan and not random.

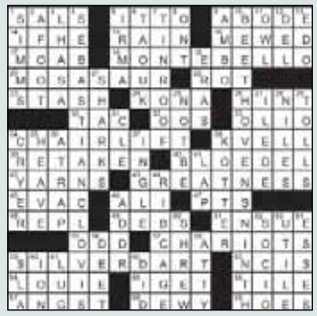
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Genesis guy
5. Half
9. 'Talk' suffix
14. Queue
15. Small batteries
16. Succeed: 2 wds.
17. Repair
18. 007 villain played by #45-Down: 3 wds.
20. Bio info
21. Head: French
22. Basketball play, Alley-__
23. Australia's version of a Sasquatch
25. Norwegian city
27. Celebrated waffle
31. __ __ the finish
33. Restrained
35. Word like Tear or Bow
38. "Madam, I swear I __ __ art at all." - Polonius, in Hamlet
39. Old English letter
40. Earthy prefix
41. 'Danger' suffix
43. Poet's 'always'
44. Ontario: __ Rock (Lake Superior Provincial Park pictographs attraction)
46. Haida Gwaii, BC: Ancient totems village on Anthony Island
49. Disappears
51. Online journal
52. '70s hit: "__ Tu"
53. Joni Mitchell's "The Last Time _ __ Richard"
55. Lyre-playing Muse
58. 'Outer'-meaning prefix
60. Barbarian
62. Garbage can
63. James Cameron and David Cronenberg
67. Troubles
68. Oscar-winner Tatum
69. Mater's mate
70. Give out
71. New Age musician
72. __-les-Mouli-neaux, France
73. "Ahem..."

Down
1. Cosmetics brand
2. San __, California
3. #28-Down's heroine Miss Shirley: wd. + wd. + wd. + letter
4. Pre-__ student
5. Marquis de __, "Quills" (2000) role
6. Keep one's __ __ the ground
7. Her __, Queen Elizabeth
8. Sport-on-blades fed.
9. Currency exchange fee
10. Some hairpieces
11. Possibilities
12. Truck type
13. 'Ranch' suffix
19. Swag
21. What police might use to disperse crowds: 2 wds.
24. 'Benedict' suffix
26. Kind of drop
28. Setting of Lucy Maud Montgomery's famous work: 2 wds.
29. Jean __ (The Balcony dramatist)
30. Some smells
32. Head-to-__
34. Pool movie, "The __" (1961)
35. 1, 2, 3... Lift!
36. For Better or For Worse dog
37. Canonical hour
42. PC 'key'
45. As per #18-Across... Canadian actor, Joseph __ (b.1918 - d.2009)
47. "The Jeffersons" star Ms. Sanford's
48. 'Super' suffix
50. __ _ snag (Become stuck)
54. Soil crawlers
56. Inclines
57. Start
59. Nero's 951
61. "_ __ can you..." (Anthem opener)
63. Sainte-__, Quebec City sector
64. Celebrity chef Ms. Garten
65. Mr. Dykstra
66. Trombonist Mr. Winding
67. Rapscallion

Friday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku

1	6	5	7	8	3	2	4	9
3	8	2	9	5	4	7	6	1
4	9	7	1	2	6	8	3	5
2	5	4	3	6	8	1	9	7
7	3	9	2	4	1	6	5	8
6	1	8	5	9	7	4	2	3
9	2	1	6	7	5	3	8	4
8	7	6	4	3	9	5	1	2
5	4	3	8	1	2	9	7	6

	1					8		
6			9					
				3		7		5
	9			1				
		6	5		8	9		
				4			6	
7		5		8				
					4			8
		3					4	

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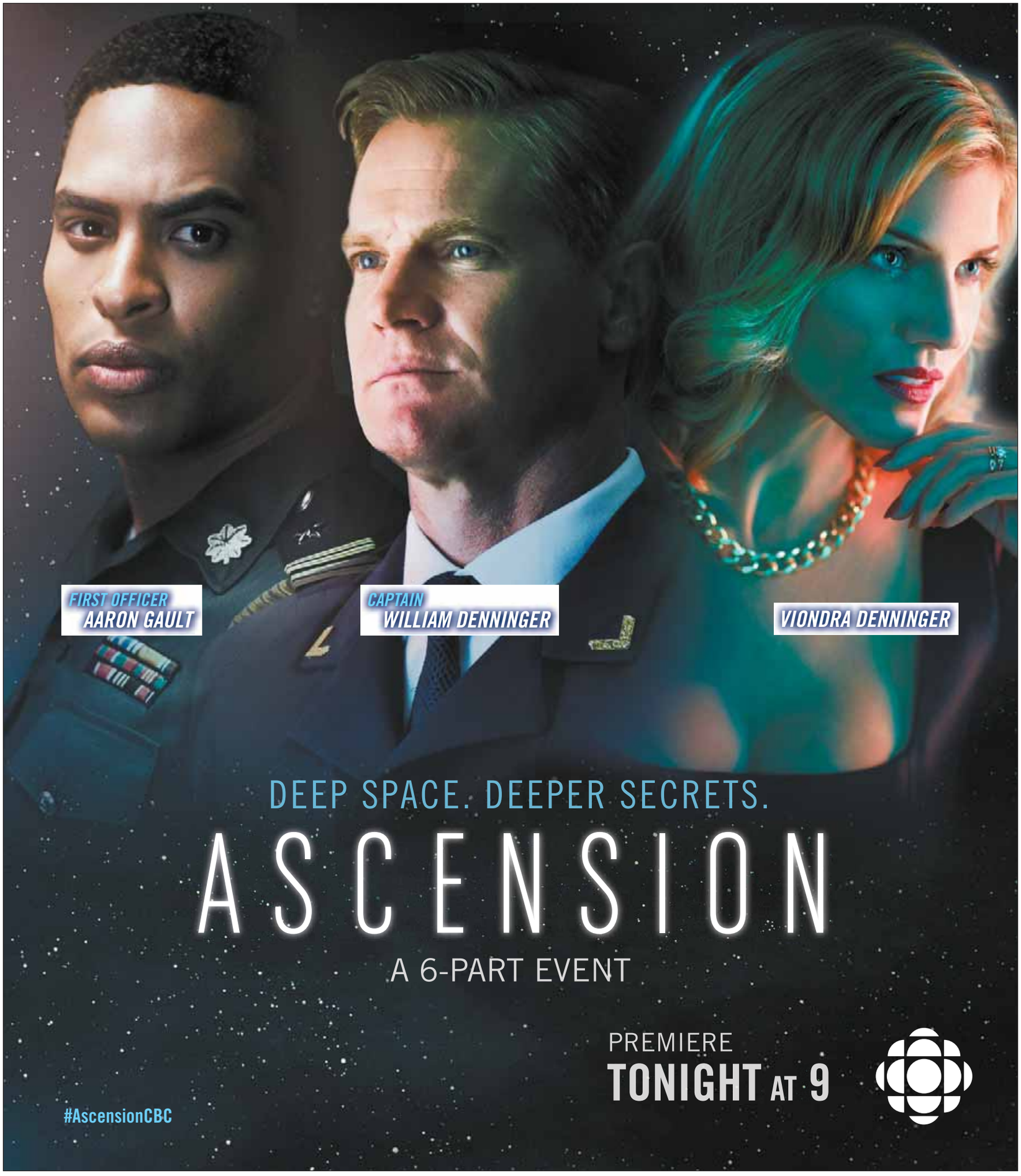
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